

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 15, 2004

The Honorable Dennis Hastert  
Speaker,  
House of Representatives  
H-232, the Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader,  
House of Representatives  
H-204, the Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Hastert and Minority Leader Pelosi:

As the House Appropriations Committee begins its work on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 Department of Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Conference Report, we wish to draw your attention to an item of vital importance to the hundreds of rural counties we represent.

As you know, the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program provides payments to counties and other local governments to offset losses in tax revenues due to the presence of substantial acreage of federal land in their jurisdictions. Since local governments are unable to tax the property values or products derived from federal lands, these payments are essential to support vital community services such as schools, firefighting, police protection, transportation infrastructure, and providing healthcare in rural communities. This program is extremely important to our rural communities because the vast majority of federal lands are located in rural and western America.

We are deeply aware of the limitations presented by our current fiscal situation. Indeed, it is important to note that many of us have supported offsets in Interior and Related Agency spending to pay for PILT increases. However, we remain firm in our belief that the federal government has a responsibility to help support local governments in areas where the federal government owns land, thereby denying it to the local tax base.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that you explore ways to bring the PILT program as close to its fully authorized funding level as possible. Doing so will demonstrate a commitment to the local communities and counties that depend on these funds, and begin the long-overdue process of fairly and accurately compensating local governments that have federal lands within their boundaries.

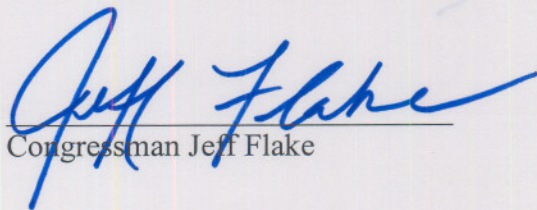
Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

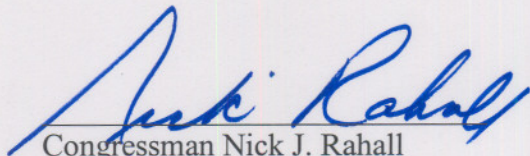




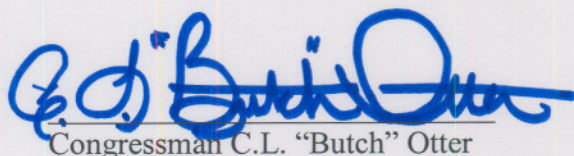
Congressman Chris Cannon



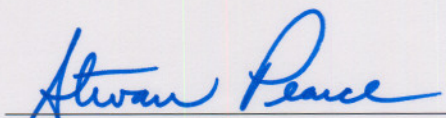
Congressman Jeff Flake



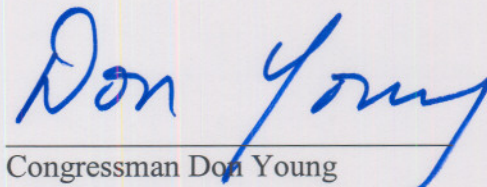
Congressman Nick J. Rahall



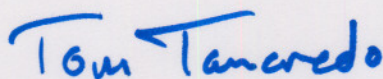
Congressman C.L. "Butch" Otter



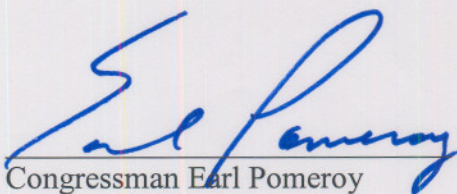
Congressman Stevan Pearce



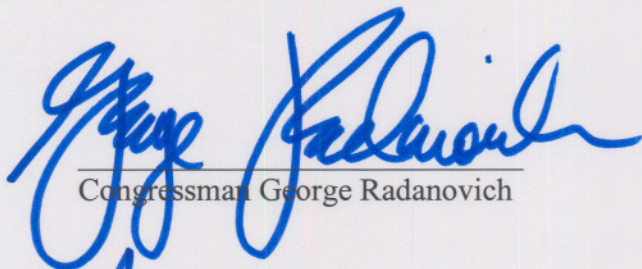
Congressman Don Young



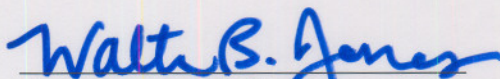
Congressman Tom Tancredo



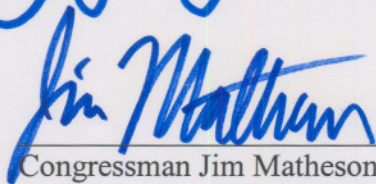
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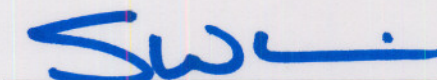
Congressman George Radanovich



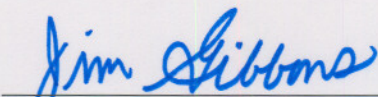
Congressman Walter Jones



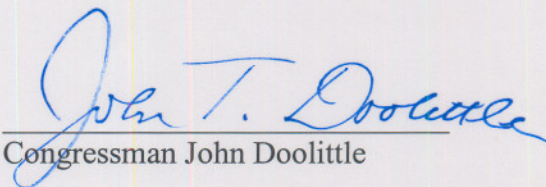
Congressman Jim Matheson



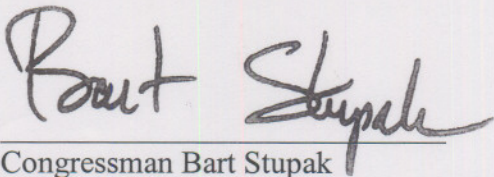
Congressman Scott McInnis



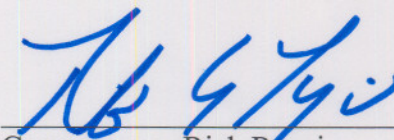
Congressman Jim Gibbons



Congressman John Doolittle

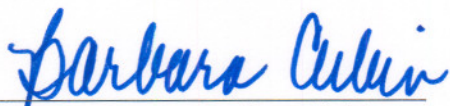


Congressman Bart Stupak

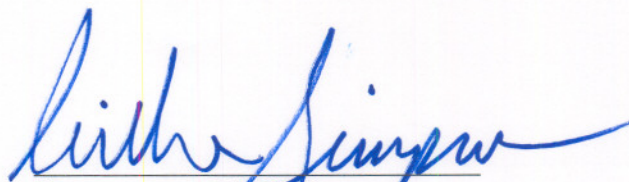


Congressman Rick Renzi

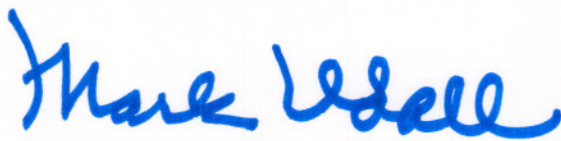




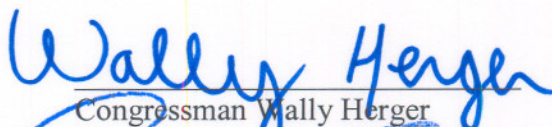
Congresswoman Barbara Cubin



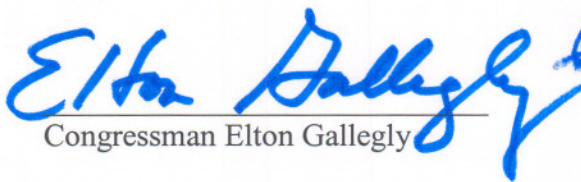
Congressman Mike Simpson



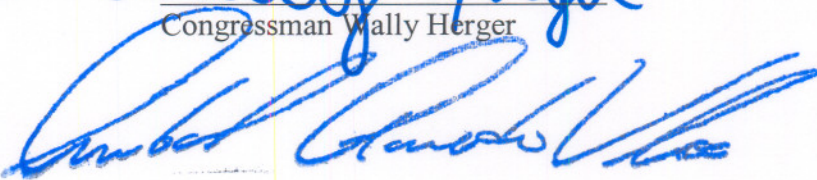
Congressman Mark Udall



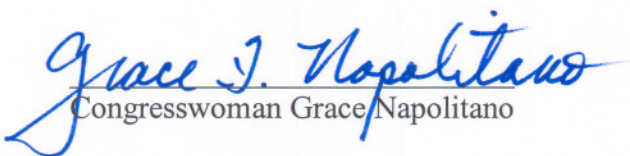
Congressman Wally Herger



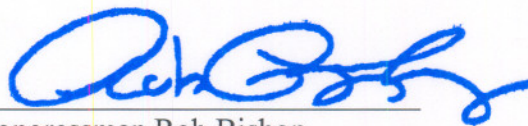
Congressman Elton Gallegly



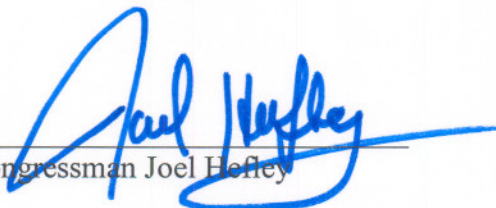
Congressman Anibal Acevedo-Vila



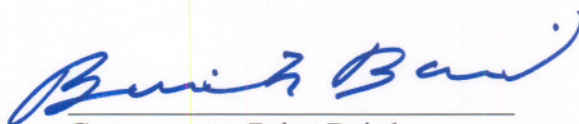
Congresswoman Grace Napolitano



Congressman Rob Bishop



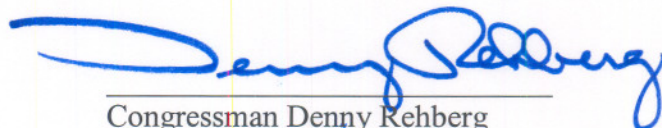
Congressman Joel Hefley



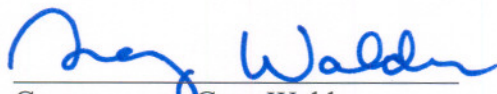
Congressman Brian Baird



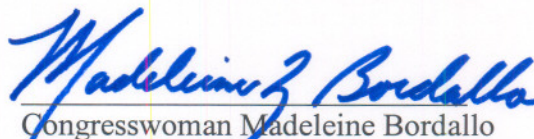
Congressman Rick Larsen



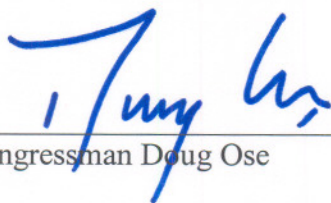
Congressman Denny Rehberg



Congressman Greg Walden



Congresswoman Madeleine Bordallo

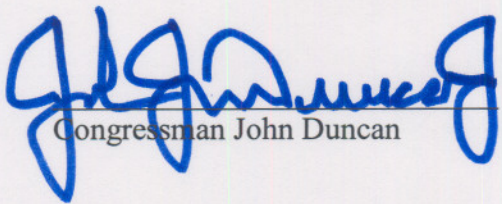


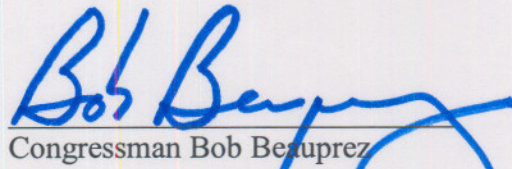
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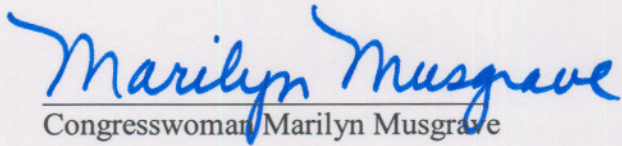


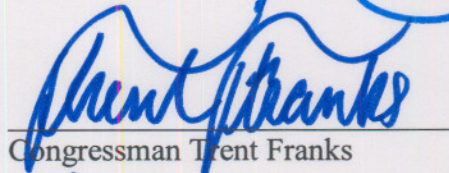
Congressman Tom Udall



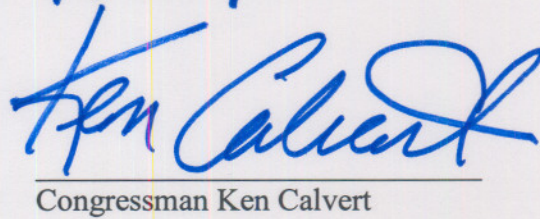
  
Congressman John Duncan

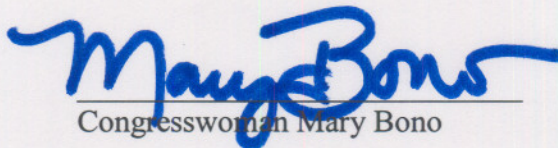
  
Congressman Bob Beauprez

  
Congresswoman Marilyn Musgrave

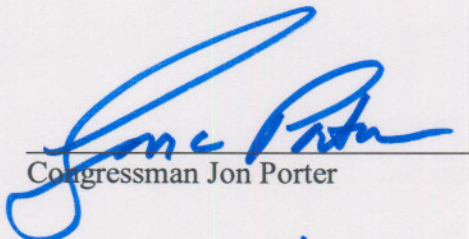
  
Congressman Trent Franks

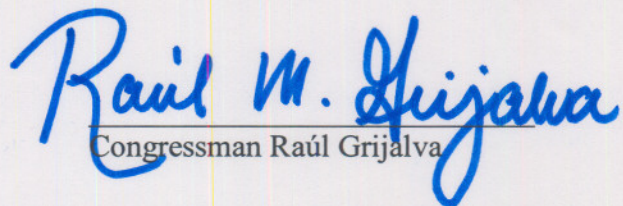
  
Congressman Bernard Sanders

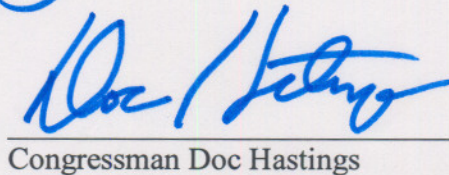
  
Congressman Ken Calvert

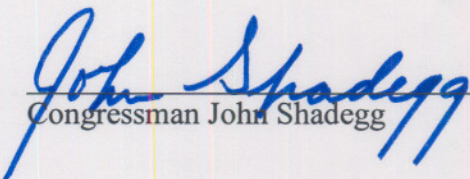
  
Congresswoman Mary Bono

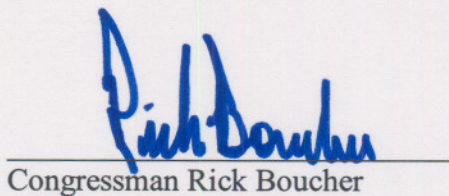
  
Congressman Dennis Cardoza

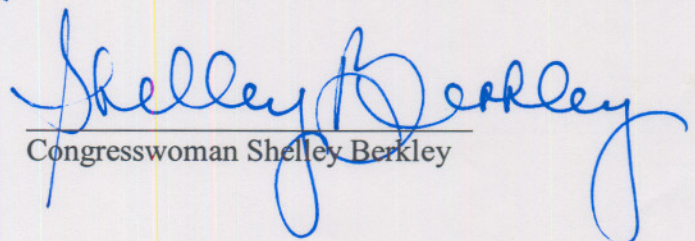
  
Congressman Jon Porter

  
Congressman Raúl Grijalva

  
Congressman Doc Hastings

  
Congressman John Shadegg

  
Congressman Rick Boucher

  
Congresswoman Shelley Berkley